

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4757

UNCLAS RANGOON 0163

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, BM
SUBJ: RICE TRADE PROSPECTS

REF: (A) STATE 8387, (B) RANGOON 0020

1. EMBASSY ESTIMATES PRODUCTION OF BURMA'S 1977 PADDY CROP WILL BE ABOUT 8.7 MILLION LONG TONS, DOWN ABOUT FIVE PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR'S OUTPUT. HOWEVER, GUB MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE STILL MAINTAINS THAT THE HARVEST WILL REACH 9.3 MILLION TONS.

2. TOTAL RICE EXPORTS FOR THE 1977/78 FISCAL YEAR WHICH ENDS MARCH 31 WILL PROBABLY BE AROUND 600,000 TONS. MOST OF THE EXPORTS FOR THIS PERIOD WERE FROM LAST YEAR'S RECORD CROP. EXPORTS FOR THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF THE PERIOD (APRIL THROUGH OCTOBER) ARE 376.6 THOUSAND TONS WHICH COMPARE QUITE WELL WITH THE 393.2 THOUSAND TONS EXPORTED IN THE SAME PERIOD OF 1976/77 WHEN TOTAL EXPORTS REACHED 666 THOUSAND TONS. GUB TRADE OFFICIALS ESTIMATE AN ADDITIONAL 100 TONS OF RICE WERE EXPORTED IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS 1977. IF SO, THIS WOULD BRING CALENDAR YEAR 1977 EXPORTS TO 631.5 THOUSAND TONS AS COMPARED WITH 625.6 THOUSAND TONS EXPORTED IN CY 1976. FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1978, THE EMBASSY ESTIMATES THAT BURMA'S EXPORTS WILL BE BETWEEN 350,000 AND 400,000 TONS. BEAN

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